

REMARKS

Reconsideration of the present application is respectfully requested.

In an effort to expedite prosecution, applicant has canceled claims 7-9, whereby claim 10 constitutes the sole pending independent claim.

Claim 10 stands rejected as obvious over Crowley in view of Ratliff, Jr. However, it is submitted that the disclosure of Crowley may have been misinterpreted in the Official action.

It is presumed that Crowley is being applied in the manner set forth at the top of page 3 of the non-final Office action dated March 13, 2003 which states:

"Crowley (figures 1-2) shows a tension force adjustable prestress girder (10) ... having tension steel wires (15, 16)... at least one or more non-tension steel wires (40, 43, 44, 45, 46). "

However, that description incorrectly characterizes the girder 10 of Fig. 2 as including the wires 15, 16 plus the wires 40, 43, 44, 45, 46 of Fig. 1. In fact, however, Figs. 1 and 2 show two different girder embodiments 30 and 10, respectively. The girder 10 (Fig. 2) has wires 15, 16 extending the full length of the girder, and short wires 17 terminating short of both ends of the girder. Thus, there is no way to couple together a plurality of the shorter wires 17 to result in a wire arrangement that can produce a tension which extends from one of the opposite ends of the girder to the other, as set forth in the final three lines of claim 10.

As regards the girder 30 of the Fig. 1 embodiment, that girder has no wires extending completely through the girder, so it is not seen how an artisan could be motivated to interconnect the short wires to form a wire assembly extending from one end to the other of the girder. Clearly, Crowley was aware that wires could extend completely through a girder (see Fig. 2) but elected not to provide such wires in Fig. 1.



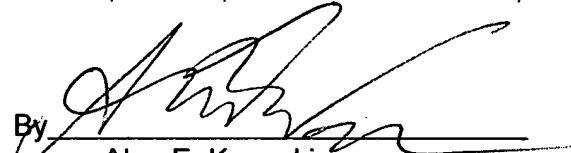
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Furthermore, the specification states at column 3, lines 7-10 that the shorter rods of Fig. 1 are intentionally cut off at the recesses, in order to reduce tension in the upper fibers. Thus, interconnecting the short wires could be considered as contrary to Crowley's own teachings.

For at least the above reasons, it would not have been obvious from the cited prior art to reconstruct Crowley's girder in the manner suggested in the Official Action. Thus, it is submitted that the application is in condition for allowance.

Respectfully submitted,

BURNS, DOANE, SWECKER & MATHIS, LLP

By 

Alan E. Kopecki
Registration No. 25,813

Post Office Box 1404
Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1404
(703) 836-6620

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